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Reds Drag U. S. into Case of Kidnappers and King Bulgarians Blame

C. I. A. for BenBarka Mystery

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The strange case of the kidnappers and the king became stranger and stranger last week.

The king, as reported in Your World last Sunday, is Hassan II of Morocco.

During his recent visit to Paris, King Hassan II was kidnapped. The kidnappers, believed to be members of the Communist Party of Morocco, demanded the release of Mehdi Ben Barka, a leftist exile living in Paris. He was picked up on a Paris street, spirited away, and is believed to have been killed. The French government, blaming Morocco, issued an international warrant for the arrest of Mohammed Oufkir, high-ranking member of the cabinet of King Hassan, on charges of kidnapping conspiracy.

France's President Charles DeGaulle, furious over the scandal caused by participation of French police and espionage agents in the kidnapping, fired the chief of the nation's counterspy machinery.

Then the Communists, always looking for unpleasant things to say about the United States, came out with a claim that the French weren't responsible for the disappearance of Mehdi Ben Barka.

Radio Sofia, official instrument of the Communist government of Bulgaria, broadcast a charge that the kidnapping was the result of plotting by the American Central Intelligence Agency—the CIA. Said Sofia . . .

Ben Barka was kidnapped to prevent him from going to the recent two-week assembly of Red delegates from 100 countries on three continents. He was one of its principal organizers. This conference, meeting in Havana, declared perpetual war on the United States and set up a permanent organization in Cuba to ignite and support Communist "wars of liberation" in Latin America, Asia and Africa. (Your World, Jan. 23.)

DeGaulle apparently paid no attention to the wild Sofia charges. Sources in the French government said he is planning further action against Morocco, in addition to the warrant for the arrest of one of the king's top ministers.



BEN BARKA



OUFKIR